

IN THE BACKWASH OF THE GREAT CRIME

Today's Barriers Between Jew and German

NORBERT MUHLEN

IN THE Franconian town of Aschaffenburg an empty lot has been transformed into a little park. At the center of the saplings and flower beds there stands a simple white tombstone on which are engraved two lines that were written by Friedrich Hölderlin more than a century ago:

*Alas, the dead you cannot bring to life
Unless it is love that does so.*

In smaller letters, the legend continues: "Here stood the synagogue of the Jewish Community, which on November 9, 1938, was destroyed by criminal hands."

Hölderlin's verse, chosen by the town fathers of Aschaffenburg for the memorial stone, might well serve as a melancholy

DESPITE a large-scale riot outside the Knesset building in Jerusalem, the Israeli government has recently decided to open negotiations with West Germany for an indemnity for Nazi crimes against the Jews. Other Jewish communities throughout the world had also come to believe—though with nothing approaching unanimity, and with exceedingly mixed feelings—that the time was ripe for official, if limited, face-to-face discussions with German leaders. The fact is that German-Jewish relations are still darkened by the shadow of the great crime perpetrated by the Germans under Hitler, a shadow deepened of late by reports of a recrudescence of neo-Nazism and anti-Semitism. All the more welcome, therefore, should be this first-hand report by NORBERT MUHLEN on how Germans are thinking about Jews, the living and the dead, today. Mr. Muhlen, who is known to COMMENTARY readers for his previous informative reports on Germany, has just returned from six months of travel and observation in that country. This article, and the one following by Herbert Lüthy, form part of COMMENTARY's continuing discussion, from various points of view, of the crucial problems posed for the Western world by Germany.

introduction to any and every survey of present-day relations between Germans and Jews. These relations are still dominated by the dead millions whom murderous hands destroyed. Of revivifying love, there is precious little sign in Germany. It is rather human inadequacy, pettiness, and selfish weakness that best flourish in the backwash of so immense and so recent a crime.

CURRENTLY, German-Jewish relations in the Western part of the country are acted out on three quite different levels, little connected with each other. First, there is the official climate of opinion exemplified in the Bonn government's position with regard to Jews and anti-Semitism. Second, there is the public attitude toward those Jews who are active in German public life (in the decades before 1940, such Jews were targets for the most virulent anti-Semitism). Third, there is the public attitude toward the "foreign Jews," most of them displaced persons who have chosen to remain, for the present at least, in Germany.

The official attitude to the "Jewish question" is in complete contrast to that of the Nazi government. Since the inception of the Federal Republic of (West) Germany in September 1949, the government and the leaders of practically all political parties have undeviatingly condemned the Nazi crimes against the Jews, as well as anti-Semitism in general. But in the making of explicit and official friendly overtures, they have been slow and hesitant. For one thing, with many other issues—economic, social, political—pressing so urgently, and sometimes desperately, this "problem of the past," which is how most German leaders have come to regard it, gets pushed aside. Another factor, whose effect on the German attitude cannot

be ignored, is that their first unofficial gestures were eyed coldly, even suspiciously, by Jewish spokesmen.* The Jewish reaction was completely understandable. Since Germans evidenced no profound sense of atonement, world Jewry could hardly be expected to do such violence to its own natural feelings as would be required by a posture of supreme forgiveness—though at times it seemed oblivious of any possible middle position between complete forgiveness and hostile rejection of all Germans, at least on the public level.

In August of last year, forty-six countries ended their state of war with Germany. Israel refused to join with them. This incident, for whatever reason, shook German opinion from the deep lethargy into which it had fallen. The news induced "in many Germans feelings of mourning, sadness, and also sympathetic understanding," Erich Lueth, Hamburg's aggressive Director of the Senate, wrote in a full-page article that was reprinted in many leading German dailies. "One thing which threatens to happen must by no means happen: that the Germans, whether from shame or out of embarrassment, whether out of not knowing what to do or out of despair, should attempt to evade the Jewish issue." With words echoing Elliot Cohen's Berlin speech,† which had strongly affected him, Lueth wrote: "It is we who must be the first to talk to the Jews. . . . We must *beg* Israel for peace."

* The pattern first appeared in 1949 when Konrad Adenauer, just elected as the first chancellor of the newly founded Federal Republic of (West) Germany, happened to be staying in the same Swiss summer resort as Chaim Weizmann, just elected the first president of the newly founded State of Israel. Dr. Adenauer (whose personal record as a lifelong foe of Nazism and anti-Semitism is spotless) wanted to pay a courtesy call; he was told that the Jew did not want to see the German. Similarly, when Theodor Heuss, the brilliant democratic intellectual and first president of the Federal Republic, publicly proclaimed that all Germans, Nazi and anti-Nazi, had a share in the "collective shame" for what the Nazis had done to the Jews, he was violently attacked by Jewish organizations for "trying to deny the collective guilt" of all Germans.

† See "What Do the Germans Propose to Do?" by Elliot E. Cohen, in the September 1950 COMMENTARY.

When I asked Chancellor Adenauer for his opinion of Dr. Lueth's proposal, he expressed full approval: "The Jews," he said, "have suffered the most bitter injury and injustice. Please believe me that the greatest part of the German people was and is truly filled with revulsion against the deeds of the past. We must find a way to let the Jews know it, they have a right to it."

Soon afterwards, on September 27, the Federal parliament in Bonn met to listen to what most observers regarded as something long overdue: a governmental declaration that "The Federal government is prepared to cooperate with the representatives of the Jews and of the State of Israel to solve the material problems of reparations in order to ease the way toward a definitive indemnity for the infinite suffering of the Jews." At the conclusion of this statement, the whole house rose quite spontaneously to its feet to demonstrate its sympathy for the Jewish victims of Nazism. The leaders of all political parties—excepting that of the Communists who remained silent, and that of the (neo-Nazi) Socialist Reich party who was not present—spoke up in favor of the government's action.

This belated declaration was accorded a most skeptical welcome by Jews abroad. Jewish organizations hastened to formulate a set of demands that would "test the good faith" of the German offer—demands for the outlawing of the expression of anti-Semitic sentiments and opinions that it would have been deemed too extreme to present to an American or British government, and which no constitutional regime could really carry out. But Bonn's offer has not been rejected, despite acrimonious debate in all Jewish communities and some near-riots in Israel's Knesset; and German and Jewish—including Israeli—representatives will soon be meeting face to face. Perhaps the gulf will yet be bridged—in a spirit of cautious reasonableness, if nothing more.

THE emerging sun of good will, however, may easily disappear behind financial, diplomatic, and legalistic clouds. There are signs that this process has already begun.

"Whatever we do," I was told by a German official close to Chancellor Adenauer, "it can never be enough. We know that. We cannot make material amends for the loss of somebody's parents gassed in Auschwitz. We cannot even make amends for, say, the loss of 'his' mountains by a refugee from Bavaria who used to climb them every weekend before he had to flee his native land. Of course, we have to try and we shall try to do our best. But then, there is another limit to our doing everything that ought to be done—our financial situation. With the millions of refugees and expellees from the East whom we have to support and whom we cannot adequately support, with the millions of war victims who cannot support themselves, with the housing situation and other vital reconstruction tasks, and with our economy precariously close to crisis all the time, we just cannot afford to be as generous to the Jews as we know we should be."

All this is true enough. Yet it is no matter for surprise that many Jews should read into such explanations a preliminary attempt to evade full responsibility.

The question would be complicated enough if there were only the individual Jewish claims for restitution (*Rückerstattung*) and compensation (*Wiedergutmachung*). Individual property expropriated or sold at a loss under Nazi rule is being returned to its original Jewish owners; where bona fide buyers now hold it, the German government has to pay damages to the latter. Much of the real estate formerly owned by Jews has already been returned, and other property will eventually be handed back within the next years. The pace is slow, but then such legal procedures always are.

The matter becomes more involved when we reach the claims for "collective reparations" in the form in which the State of Israel has filed them. The horse-trading which is almost necessarily bound to dominate negotiations over these "reparations claims" will work hard against a genuine atmosphere of reconciliation. How does one reckon the cash value of Jewish lives lost or careers wrecked? With the "damages" for

mass murder to be paid for in dollars and cents, there is ample room for double-talk, demagoguery, and nasty imputations of bad faith. Dollars-and-cents restitution can never be the measure of German repentance, no more than it can be the price of Jewish forgiveness. To mix the two problems is to court unending recrimination and utter moral confusion. Money restitution will be made, in some form and amount. But trust and acceptance must be won on other levels and by the exchange of other goods.

THE mood of the Bonn government pretty accurately reflects that of most Germans, so far as anti-Semitism is concerned. The overwhelming majority want "peace with the Jews," though for many this probably means only the absence of enmity made possible by an absence of contacts.

Even the ruthless, avowedly anti-democratic leaders of the neo-Nazi SRP (*Sozialistische Reichspartei*), though they exploit every popular grievance and are undisguisedly nostalgic for the Third Reich, have no use for anti-Semitism. This represents no moral revolution on their part—they simply feel that Hitler's anti-Semitism was a gross political error and, besides, that the issue no longer has demagogic value. Fritz Dorls, the Fuehrer of the SRP in the Bonn parliament, a man obsessed with a lust for power and a hatred of democracy, asserted in a talk with this writer that he and his party stood for "full and equal rights for the Jews," and that Hitler's Jewish policies had been "fundamentally wrong." Anti-Semitism, he said, is "rejected by the SRP as a point of principle." Dorls's second-in-command, ambitious Count Wolf von Westarp, added that there are "one full Jew and two half-Jews" in the party's central executive committee, and that "anti-Semitism has no place in its ranks." Insincere as they may be, their remarks certainly indicate how unfashionable anti-Semitism as a *Weltanschauung* is in Germany.

The sole public statement defending Hitler's anti-Semitism was made in 1950 by one Fritz Hedler, then deputy of the DRP (*Deutsche Rechtspartei*), a semi-Nazi splin-

ter party whose most radical members have since formed the neo-Nazi SRP; in an election speech, he said that "there should have been better ways to get rid of the Jews than those used by Adolf Hitler." He was promptly expelled from his party, and at present seems to have faded from the German political scene altogether. More recently, the first—and so far only—anti-Semitic speech, a veiled one at that, was delivered in the Bonn parliament, fifty days after the governmental declaration on restitution, by Franz Richter, a Sudeten expellee elected in Lower Saxony on the DRP ticket and now affiliated with the SRP. He claimed that for Germans to offer reparations to Israel meant trading with an enemy who had not yet ended his state of war with Germany, and that therefore the Bonn deputies who advocated these reparations were "collaborators who, according to the usage of our liberators, must be punished, as you well know, as you have approved, and as they deserve." The rest of the house answered with furious protest, and Richter was immediately silenced by the chairman.

THAT racist anti-Semitism in the Hitler tradition has disappeared from German public affairs is shown most convincingly by the fact that not a single voice has been raised so far to attack as Jews those Germans of Jewish descent, or that substantial number of Germans called by Hitler *Mischlinge* (people with one to three Jewish grandparents), who are active today in German political and academic life. In the Weimar Republic, when such a man was elected or appointed to a public office or professorship, the rightist press, not to mention the Nazi press, was quick with an anti-Semitic slander. In 1951, however, not even an allusion to the fact that he was a Jew was made when Rudolf Katz was appointed vice-president of the Verfassungsgerichtshof, a kind of federal supreme court; and few people either know or are interested in the fact that the government's Associate Federal Secretary of Justice, Walter Strauss, or the legal adviser to the new Foreign Office, Erich Kaufmann, to name only two, are "full" Jews.

That Hitler "committed a crime" against the Jews, or that his anti-Semitism was "*eine ganz grosse Schweinerei*" is quite commonplace for older Germans to say. Usually they state this in a mild, very matter-of-fact way, which leaves no doubt as to their sincerity but which does provoke some misgivings as to whether they are fully aware of what Nazi anti-Semitism meant and did. Most Germans with whom I got to talk about Hitler's Jewish policies condemned the *Kristallnacht*—the evening of November 9, 1938 when the SA and SS burned down the synagogues, looted Jewish shops, destroyed Jewish property, and arrested many Jews "in retaliation for the Grynspan murder in Paris"—while not mentioning the extermination of six million Jewish persons between 1942 and 1945. The *Kristallnacht* was something many of them witnessed personally. The death camps they learned about at a time when their world was, physically and morally, collapsing about them, when sheer survival preoccupied their wits; hence, though they are acquainted by now with all the facts, these facts still lack full status as a reality. Or perhaps one should say rather that their minds still resist accepting these facts as a reality; there can be no doubt that a profound sense of impotent shame makes most Germans shy away from any reflection on the enormous crime and keeps them from accepting responsibility for anything but the lesser one.

As for the young, meaning most Germans who are still under thirty, they have little awareness of or interest in the whole tragic matter. They grew up after it was over, and while they have the overpowering memories of the chaos that prevailed at the end of the war and in the first postwar years, few have had any personal experience of Nazi anti-Semitism in action, or even any personal contact with Jews. Among a small group of younger intellectuals, there has developed a sort of violent philo-Semitism; but, for most, neither anti-Semitism nor anti-anti-Semitism is of moment—their interest in politics is in any case peripheral, and all their passion is involved in their personal futures.

NEVERTHELESS, despite the attitude of the Bonn government and the bad conscience and indifference of most of the people, there are thin currents of anti-Semitism still trickling through German society. To some extent, unhappily, these currents are fed by the presence and behavior of a certain segment among the displaced persons.

The great mass of the Jewish DP's have by now left Germany. Of those who remained, a small number established businesses and settled down; there are also approximately 1,000 who married German girls and disappeared into German life (no case of a Jewish DP girl having married a German is known to this writer). There is a somewhat larger group of Jews still living in the last Jewish DP camp in Föhrenwald in Upper Bavaria; these are the so-called "hard-core" cases, generally sick people waiting to be sent to Israel by agreement with the International Refugee Organization (IRO). In this camp are also the so-called "returnees," Jews who returned from Israel after having lived there for one or more years. All these inmates are supported by unemployment insurance paid out rather grudgingly by the local Bavarian authorities, and by donations from American organizations such as the International Rescue Committee, the Jewish Labor Committee, and the Joint Distribution Committee (the last snubbing "returnees" as a rule). Hidden away from public view, living a rather autarchic community life (except for shopping or bartering in the nearby village, employing local cleaning women, and having clandestine relations with their Bavarian neighbors), these DP's have practically no contacts with Germans.

IT is different with that unhappily larger and more conspicuous group of Jewish DP's who preferred to stay on in postwar Germany, after the great majority of Jewish DP's had left, because it afforded them an opportunity to live on the fringe of society.

Munich's Möhlstrasse, where a sizable proportion of these DP's congregate,* has

* See "The Shooting on the Möhlstrasse," by Norbert Muhlen, COMMENTARY, October 1949.

overcome its lowly black-market beginnings; it looks more settled today than it did two years ago, with new coffeehouses and restaurants among its many food, fur, silver, and textile stores, and with expensive cars parked in front of them; rather tough-looking groups of young men watch you closely as you walk the street. Every police raid on the Möhlstrasse last year turned up large quantities of stolen or smuggled goods. Along with smuggling on a big scale, various other "rackets" and "crime syndicates" flourish.

Similar situations exist in other big and some smaller cities. A nationwide band, calling itself "The Strong Ones" (*Die Starken*), with methods very similar to the American gangs of the Prohibition era, is known to dominate most DP crime. When one of its members is "taken for a ride" and knifed to death, or when others are arrested, police and press refer only to "X, an alien," or "a member of the alien gang, The Strong Ones," but the common assumption is that a Jew is meant. Even when "alien" actually refers to a Greek, a Ukrainian, a Slovak, or another national of Germany's great underworld, it is usually taken for granted that he is a Jew.

Only a few fair and thoughtful Germans seem to remember that it was Hitler who threw these DP's, both the Jews and the others, onto the path of crime, first by uprooting them from their native communities, then by forcing them to dodge and break the law continuously if they wanted to survive, finally by making them believe that laws were made for others and that they had no duty toward the others—in this case mainly, and particularly, the Germans. And few Germans will take the time to recognize the fact that these Jewish DP's are only part of the last small residue of a large group that has left Germany, and that they constitute a tiny, very abnormal selection from "the Jews" as a whole. To many Germans, especially the young and very young ones, these outlaw Jews—the only Jews they have ever seen—almost necessarily appear as *the* Jews.

What had been a vicious myth of anti-Semitic invention for more than a century,

and one which played such a large role in the history of German anti-Semitism: the claim that the Jews were "aliens" who could not and would not be integrated into German life, that they were parasites on the rest of the population—is objectively true of these DP's. As a matter of fact, they would be the first to proclaim it, from their hatred of Germany as well as from an arrogance with which they compensate themselves for the humiliations and inhuman outrages they suffered under Hitler.

THE stereotype of the Jew as a parasitic "enemy of society" has always been a special obsession of the Germans, who have a primitive, near-tribal fear and suspicion of "outsiders."* And not only has this stereotype been given new life in Western Germany since 1945—it has been reinforced during the past couple of years by several rather sensational scandals that were front-page news and became topics of general conversation. After the Morgenbesser case in Frankfurt on the Main, where the director of the Jewish Restitution Bank and some of his co-workers fled abroad after embezzling the capital of their bank—for the most part "Jewish money"—the case of Philipp Auerbach in Munich has become the center of nationwide interest.

The "Auerbach case" cannot be understood without a look at the atmosphere in Germany, and the situation of the Jews there, in the first postwar years. Law and order had broken down. Even that old and

reliable backbone of German orderliness, the bureaucracy, did not prove immune to corruption. The top police officials in Munich, and a number of other high officials appointed in the first postwar years—all non-Jews—have since been removed from office on account of their shady deals. Jews experienced perhaps greater temptation than others. After all the injustice done them, many felt no sense of responsibility toward the German community. Moreover, they could act with a certain measure of impunity. Many Germans—not to speak of the occupation authorities—at the time gave a kind of general absolution to anything done by them. Thus, among some unscrupulous Jews, there developed a feeling that "anything goes."

Philipp Auerbach was an ambitious, perhaps mentally sick, yet impressive adventurer. Born in 1906 in Hamburg, where he attended the Hebrew High School without being graduated from it, then going into business, he left Germany for Belgium when Hitler came to power. In his country of exile, he was sentenced and fined for unlawful acts as a drug manufacturer. He was arrested by the Nazis when they invaded Belgium, and was sent to several concentration camps, the last one being that of Gross-Rosen, where he became a "barracks chief." Charges by five Jewish fellow inmates that he mistreated them and others, and participated in privately selling their food rations, have been published by *Atid*, a Jewish magazine in Brussels, but have not been proved. In 1945 he was liberated by the British and employed for a while by their Military Government which finally dismissed him for incompetence.

At the time, Bavaria had just fired its first—non-Jewish—State Commissioner for the Persecutees of Hitler, and was looking for a new one. On the recommendation of the Social Democratic party, which Auerbach had joined, and vouched for by Jewish relief organizations, Auerbach was appointed to this important job. In his *curriculum vitae*, which nobody bothered to check, he introduced himself as a doctor of science, a hero of the anti-Nazi resistance, and a man later

* Germans tend in any case to be insecure in the face of "the alien." That this insecurity stems from the self-consciousness of a half-formed, still uncohesive nation, has been argued by German historians since Theodor Mommsen wrote his splendid *Another Word on Our Jews*. Since the alien outgroups domesticated in Germany have always hailed from the East of Europe—whether they were Jews or Poles—they were usually "backward" in terms of Western culture, so that the Germans felt they had to "defend themselves" against them. "Before the war, in the good old times, we had lots of foreigners here every summer; but now things are bad, now only the aliens [sic] are coming," an old lady told me on a Munich park bench. The most compact and the most conspicuous group of such "aliens" are the Jewish DP's.

sentenced to death by a Nazi People's Court—none of which was at all true. As State Commissioner for the Persecutees of Hitler, and later as president of the Land Compensation Office, Auerbach gave weekly sermons over the Bavarian radio, acquired influence by involving himself in local politics, acted as assistant rabbi of the Jewish communities in Bavaria as well as their political representative, and was a public speaker on every occasion at which Hitler's victims made themselves heard. Under his jurisdiction were the approximately one hundred thousand surviving Jews who had crowded into Bavaria after the war, as well as the claims of all other Bavarian persecutees or their heirs. He had the power to decide what claims going through his office should be approved or not, and whether there was to be immediate payment or none. The settlement of these claims involved complicated deals with Bavarian authorities and banks.

ALTHOUGH there were persistent rumors about strange things that went on in Auerbach's office, ranging from bribery to blackmail, forgery, perjury, theft, and large-scale smuggling, they provoked no action by the government. But finally, in the summer of 1951, the Bavarian Minister of Justice raided Auerbach's office and arrested him. The minister was Joseph Mueller, a colorful personality himself, three times arrested by the Gestapo People's Court as a secret agent for the Allies and conspirator against Hitler's life, now an advocate of German appeasement of Soviet Russia, and a personal foe of Auerbach. The evidence in Auerbach's files appeared to substantiate the very grave charges against him; but he pleaded not guilty when, on November 21, he was charged with three cases of embezzlement in office, two cases of blackmail, nine cases of larceny and fraud, and one case each of accepting bribes, extorting fees, perjury, illegal use of academic titles, and violations of the Allied Military Government currency laws.

Whether Auerbach was himself legally implicated in all these deeds or was ignorant of their commission by his employees—some

of whom have fled abroad, admitting their guilt—has still to be decided by a regular court. It is certain that of the 13,767 cases on which payments were made through his office, 1,566 turned out to be forged, and 414 probably forged. Of indorsed payments pre-financed by Bavarian banks to the Auerbach office, another considerable number was based on forgeries. To get the money, which was principally contributed by the Bavarian government, persecutees had only to be approved by Auerbach, and supply an affidavit sworn under a rabbinical oath. (That the rabbi who officiated, a close friend of Auerbach, came to Munich as a penniless DP in 1945, and one year later bought a princely country estate, was another disagreeable facet of this thoroughly disagreeable affair.) In addition, Auerbach's office had traded in gift packages ordered or sent from abroad, selling them on the black market through private dealers. At least 34,460 kilograms of coffee and 52 million cigarettes were disposed of in this manner. Finally, there were complaints by Jewish persecutees that their property had disappeared in the office of Auerbach rather than been given back to them; there were also charges that memorial monuments to the victims of concentration camps promoted by him, as well as issues of memorial stamps in their honor, all served to enrich Auerbach. As this article is written, an investigating committee of the Bavarian parliament is scrutinizing the case, and it must be said that this committee, as well as Minister Mueller and the greater part of the German press, have been most scrupulous to avoid possible anti-Semitic overtones in prosecuting and reporting the case. Not, however, with complete success.

This ugly affair can be—and has been—"explained," of course. After all, German officialdom as a whole, as we have indicated, has not been so pure and spotless after the war that the Auerbach case could be viewed and judged in isolation. And then, the business of "compensating" a large number of penniless foreigners for losses the actuality of which could be rarely proved, at least not in a hurry, while payments had to be made

in a hurry, was something so unheard of that only a non-bureaucratic "bohemian" like Auerbach could tackle the job at all, and it is not too astonishing that he might have to use unusual methods that would not stand up against later legalistic scrutiny. One could go on and on. . . .

But most Germans, it is my impression, do not think about the juicy scandal around Auerbach, or the crime chronicle of the DP's and "The Strong Ones," in such large terms: the great grafter in his luxurious office, and the little racketeer on the next street corner, were just "Jews" to be distrusted and disliked. As a result, anti-Semitic insinuations and innuendoes that would not have been listened to a few years ago are again being heard; they do not intrude into politics, are rarely made explicit in print, and certainly do not have the pathological accents of the Nazi epoch; yet they taint the atmosphere.

IT WAS probably inevitable that, in the backwash of crime, the ruination and corruption of the past should still be visible, and should poisonously infect the present. What in American eyes are "normal" standards of community relations and group tolerance cannot yet be applied in Germany where the after-effects of totalitarian rule and total war still dominate all physical, moral, and spiritual existence, notwithstanding the appearances and real achievements of reconstruction. Since so few Jews are left, and since the few who are left form a very abnormal group, German attitudes toward them do not indicate much about the index of real tolerance prevailing today in Germany. But these attitudes do point to a more fundamental fact, namely, that the majority of Germans have deep down in their souls not clearly divorced themselves from the Nazi period.

In this respect, the present attitude to Hitler's murder of those non-Jewish Germans who actively opposed him is significantly depressing. Far from celebrating the memory of the men who tried to kill Hitler on July 20, 1944 and were murdered by his hangmen, far from expressing pride in the Munich students and professors who called for

rebellion against Hitler and were executed by him, a public debate actually rages today as to whether they—or any other Germans—had the right actively to oppose a government in power, and whether the oath sworn to the Fuehrer should not have been more binding than any considerations of moral and natural law. Indeed, it is not too much to say that these martyrs do not find that sympathy in the eyes of many non-Nazi Germans today which even the Jews receive, for while the Jews are considered passive victims of governmental *force majeure*, the conspirators and rebels are held to have transgressed the border of obedient submission to the *Staat*, and thus set themselves apart from "right" standards of behavior.

The central ominous fact about Germany today is that to the ordinary German the Third Reich appears as a decade of German history more or less like other decades of the past, with its regrettable "excesses" as well as its "good sides," though perhaps a bit more spectacular. The attempts of a minority of democratic Germans to alter this state of mind have not yet achieved much—not to mention the attempts, sometimes clumsy, often naive, and occasionally insincere, of American occupation personnel, which have in the final balance perhaps done more harm than good. That most Germans who are so indifferent about the Nazi past are by no means Nazis themselves, but rather *Unpolitische* ("non-politicals"), does not give much consolation; for it is exactly on the base of such "non-political" individuals forming the majority of the people that totalitarianism comes to power and rule.

If the Germans today are far from being the racist, bloodthirsty, Nietzschean Nazis that some fearful propagandists would have us believe, they seem equally far from being democratic citizens of a healthy, regenerated community. Spiritually tired, physically hard-working, retreating into the total privacy of their personal worlds, they are a mass of passive individuals who have not yet found the beginning of that moral coherence and social initiative which form the foundation of any civilized, integrated community.